

COMPOSTING COMPOSTING COMPOSTING



Recycling & Conservation, Inc.
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WHY COMPOST?

Compost at home: Recycle in your own backyard! You'll never need to buy expensive fertilizers again, because you can make nature's best complete fertilizer at home from your own leaves, grass clippings and kitchen scraps. Compost is the end product of a biological process which turns fresh leaves, grass cuttings and kitchen scraps into a dark, nutrient rich and odorless soil conditioner. It is the best and least expensive way to improve your lawn, vegetable and flower gardens, fruit and ornamental trees and potting soil for house plants. Don't throw away materials that can save you money- and make yours a greener, more lush landscape.

How to Make Compost. The composting process can take from 2 weeks to a year depending on the materials that you incorporate into the pile and on how often the pile is turned. In order to have finished compost in 6 weeks to .3 months you must mix your ingredients the proper ratio. A properly constructed compost pile will contain 2/3 material that is high in carbon and 1/3 high in nitrogen, all thoroughly moistened but not too wet.

Compost Materials

<i>High Carbon</i>	<i>High Nitrogen</i>
leaves	manure
hay	grass clippings
(fresh)	
weeds	kitchen scraps
garden trash	fertilizers

Your compost pile should be made with materials that are readily available to you. For most homeowners this means leaves, grass clippings and kitchen scraps (NO MEAT SCRAPS: THEY ATTRACT RODENTS).

Here's how to make and care for your pile so that you will have it ready when you need it. First of all you'll need to rake up your leaves into a pile or bin neat to where your compost pile is going to be. You can build your pile bit by bit, as you generate new kitchen scraps or all at once if you have a lot of leaves, kitchen scraps and grass clippings accumulated.

Start with a 6 inch layer of coarse material (like branches, twigs, cornstalks, etc.). Then add a 6" layer of leaves over at least a 4' x 4' area (4' width is ideal and you can make it as long as you wish). As you spread your leaves make sure that you are moistening them thoroughly. Then spread a 2" layer of grass clippings, kitchen scraps or manure over the leaves and mix the layers together, again moistening as you mix. Repeat this process until you have a pile that is at least 4 ft. tall. If the pile is of sufficient size (4' x 4' x 4', minimum), contains the proper ratio of organic matter, and is moist throughout it will heat up to nearly 160 degrees in two-three days. In a week or two get your fork and hose and turn the pile. As you turn your pile watch for the following.

1. Too wet (rank odor) -add dry leaves or grass as you turn
2. Too dry (white mold) - water as you turn

If the pile is not warm but is moist (but not too wet!) then add more high nitrogen material to help it heat up.

Uses of Compost. Finished compost adds nutrients and humus to the soil, improving its texture and increasing its ability to hold air and water. Compost can be substituted for peat moss in any of your gardening tasks.

Vegetable and Flower Gardens: add 3" to your soil and turn into the top 6" of your soil before planting.

Fruit and Ornamental Tree Planting: dig the hole at least 2' deep. mix 1/2 compost to 1/2 soil for your Planting medium.

Feeding Your Trees and Shrubs: Spread up to 6" of compost around base of trees and shrubs to their drip line. before the heat of summer.

Potting Soil: Houseplants or container grown vegetables, plants or trees will all benefit from a potting soil consisting of 4" sifted compost, along with sand, soil, peat, perlite or other appropriate substances. 100 % sifted compost is excellent for container vegetables and can be used for starting vegetable seedlings.

Lawn: Top dress lawn with 1/2 " of sifted compost in the spring.

Other uses of leaves and grass clippings: Leaves and grass clippings have other uses around the home, so please don't throw them away.

Mulch: Vegetable and flower gardens, foundation plantings, shrubs and trees should all be mulched with at least 3" of organic matter.' This will reduce soil temperature and reduce the amount of -t-atering necessary, again saving you money.

Slow Compost: by merely piling leaves and 'or grass in a large pile (4' x 4' x 4' minimum! you will have a fine humus in approximately one year. This gives you the benefits of compost with less work.

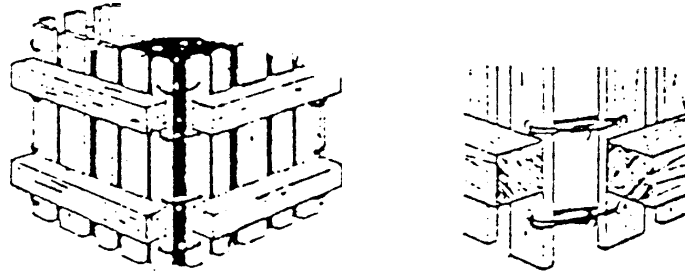
How Compost helps the environment..

1. Saves municipal landfill space.
2. Reduces need for fertilizers and plastic bags both oil based products.
3. Makes your landscape: and more productive.

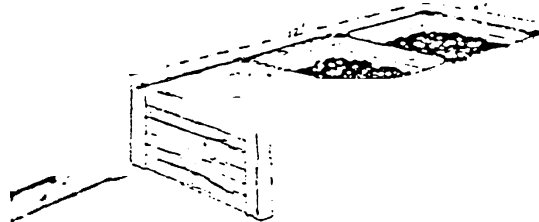
How Compost saves you money.

1. No more buying expensive fertilizers.
2. Reduced watering in the garden and landscape
3. No more buying expensive plastic bags
4. No more buying peat moss

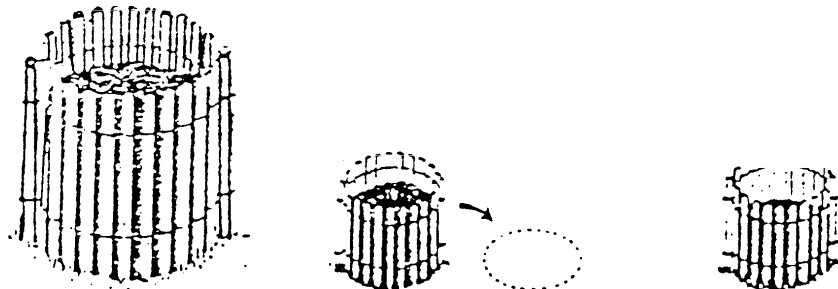
You don't need to spend much money to compost your household wastes!



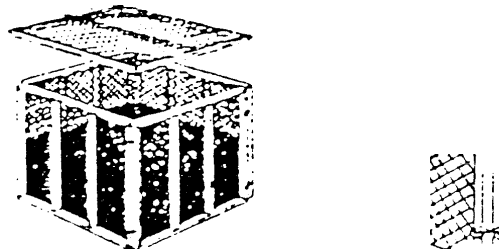
Pallets are thrown away each year. You can find them in most towns for free and they make durable bins.



To make an all-wood, threecompartment bin you need eight strong posts set at least two feet into the ground.



Snow fence makes strong but light bins that look good. To turn compost, take down the bin, then set it up again a few feet away and turn the compost into it.



This bin with rain cover is very light and easy to stare. The four side panels are connected with hooks and eves. For more information on composting; call: Recycling & Conservation, Inc., P. O. Box 112, No. Berwick, ME 03906 Tel. 207-676-3708